

# ALABAMA SUPREME COURT

									
	Tommy Bryan	William Sellers	Jay Mitchell	Tom Parker	Greg Shaw	Brad Menheim	Kelli Wise	Michael Bolin	Sarah Stewart
Confidence Score	Strong Republican	Strong Republican	Strong Republican	Strong Republican	Strong Republican	Strong Republican	Strong Republican	Strong Republican	Strong Republican
Opinion Partners				✓	✓				
Dissenting Minority									
Determining Majority									
Lone Dissenter		✓	✓						

## SUMMARY

- ▶ Number of justices: **9**
- ▶ Number of cases: **692**
- ▶ Percentage of cases with a unanimous ruling: **83.4% (577)**
- ▶ Justice most often writing the majority opinion: **Justice Mitchell (90)**
- ▶ Per curiam decisions: **21**
- ▶ Concurring opinions: **44**
- ▶ Justice with most concurring opinions: **Justice Mendheim (9)**
- ▶ Dissenting opinions: **33**
- ▶ Justice with most dissenting opinions: **Justice Shaw (10)<sup>8</sup>**

## COURT CONTENTION

In 2020, at least one justice of the Alabama Supreme Court disagreed with the majority's ruling in 115 cases which was 16.6 percent of the time the court issued a ruling.

### Opinion partners

In 2020, the Alabama Supreme Court decided 25 cases 7-2. Justices Parker and

<sup>8</sup> Although Sellers and Mitchell dissented in more cases, many of those dissents were not accompanied by written opinions. Shaw wrote the greatest number of dissenting opinions of any justice on the court.

Shaw allied in dissent 13 times, which was more frequently than any other two justices on the court. In our *Ballotpedia Courts: State Partisanship* study, Justices Parker and Shaw both recorded a Strong Republican Confidence Score.

### **Dissenting minority**

In 2020, the Alabama Supreme Court decided 12 cases by split decision. Justice Sellers was in the minority seven times, which was more than any other justice on the court. Across all split decisions, no group of four justices allied frequently in the dissent.

### **Determining majority**

In the cases decided by split decision, no justices frequently allied in the majority. Justice Stewart was the only justice who did not dissent in a split decision, but she did not participate in four cases decided by split decision. Every justice dissented in at least three cases decided by split decision.

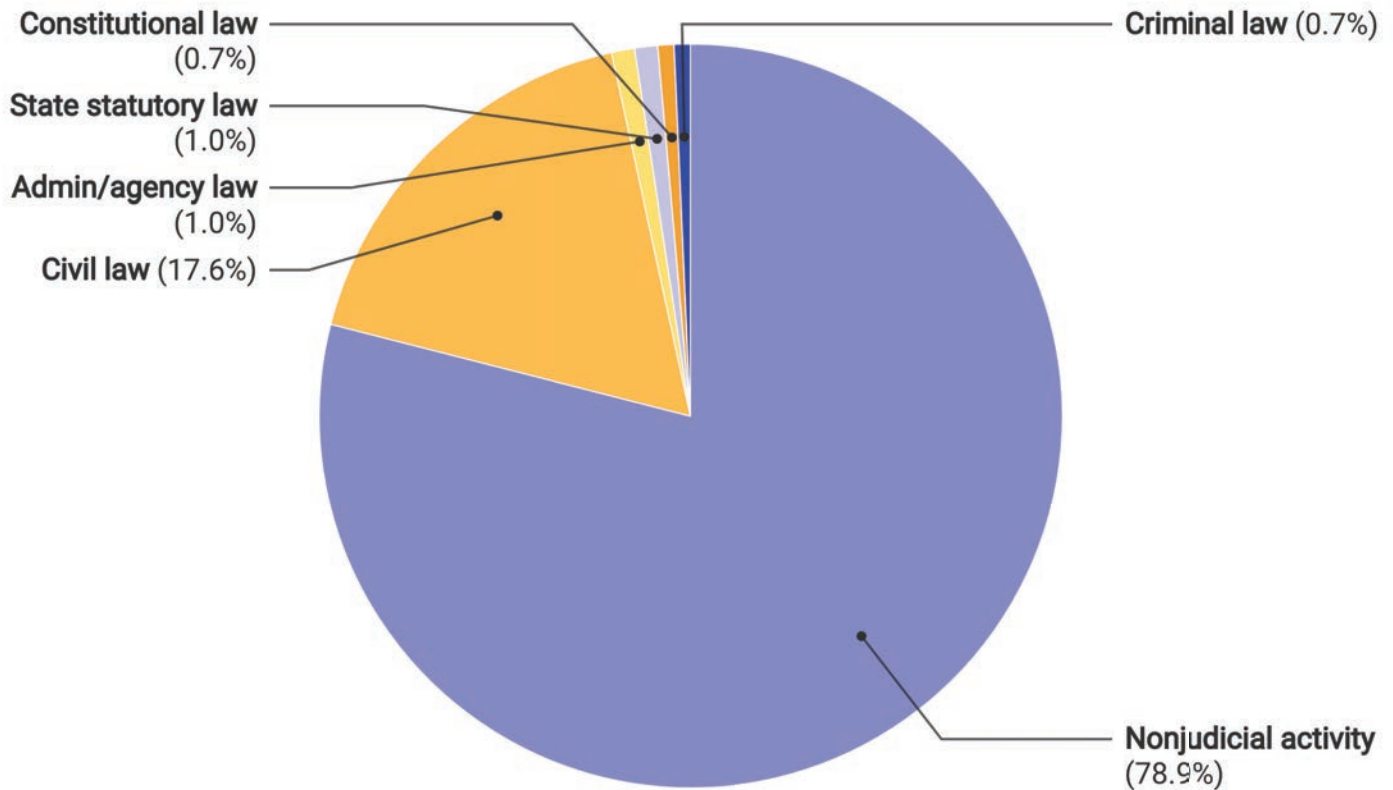
### **Lone dissenter**

In 2020, there was a lone dissenter in 37 cases before the Alabama Supreme Court. Justice Sellers dissented alone 18 times, which was more than any other justice. In our *Ballotpedia Courts: State Partisanship* study, Justice Sellers recorded a Strong Republican Confidence Score. Justice Mitchell was a lone dissenter 13 times. In our *Ballotpedia Courts: State Partisanship* study, Justice Mitchell recorded a Strong Republican Confidence Score.

## **COURT JURISDICTION**

The supreme court has jurisdiction to review the decisions reached by lower courts within the state. It is also authorized to review matters of contention where the dollar amount in question exceeds \$50,000 (if no other Alabama court has jurisdiction) and to review cases over which no other state court has jurisdiction. The court also hears appeals from the Alabama Public Service Commission. The supreme court has a supervisory role over the other courts in the state and is charged with making rules governing administration, practice, and procedure in all courts.

## Case types decided by Alabama Supreme Court, 2020



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The most common case category heard by the Alabama Supreme Court in 2020 was nonjudicial activity. Of the 692 cases it heard, 546 were nonjudicial activity cases, or 78.9 percent of its caseload for the year. nonjudicial activity involves a formal hearing and discussion before the court. In Alabama, all 546 of these cases resulted in court orders rather than opinions.

The second most common cases that reached the supreme court were civil law cases. A civil case is one that involves a dispute between two parties, one of whom seeks reparations or damages. The Alabama Supreme Court heard 122 civil law cases in 2020, or 17.6 percent of its total caseload for the year.